



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Memphis District

News Release

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Corps of Engineers raises floodfight response to Phase II

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 25, 2011 – The Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, initiated Phase II floodfighting activities at 7 a.m. on April 24 due to high Ohio and Mississippi river stages. The area of current flooding is located in the northern portion of the Memphis District and includes areas of western Kentucky and Tennessee, southern Illinois and the bootheel of Missouri.

“Based on current National Weather Service forecasts, we are anticipating near-record flood levels in many parts of the Memphis District,” Col. Vernie Reichling, the Corps’ Memphis District Commander said. “We have not seen levels predicted this high since 1937.”

Phase II floodfight activities begin when the river gage at Cairo, Ill., reaches 52.0 feet with a sustained rise forecasted. As of 3 p.m. on April 24, the river stage at Cairo is 53 feet with a forecasted crest of 58.5 feet. The river stage at Cape Girardeau, Mo., at 3 p.m. on April 24 is 38.8 feet with a forecasted crest of 44.5 feet. Flood stage at Cape Girardeau is 32.0 feet.

The reduction of risk to life and property is our number one priority,” Col. Reichling said. “Although there is always some residual risk, we will bring to bear all available resources to ensure we meet our commitment to public safety.”

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During Phase II floodfight activities, Corps of Engineers personnel begin more intensive monitoring of flood control works including levees, floodwalls and pumping stations. They also make technical and materiel assistance available to local communities and flood control organizations to aid them in their floodfighting efforts.

As part of their routine Phase II response efforts, the Memphis District has established field offices in Cape Girardeau, Mo., and Dyersburg, Tenn., with eight field personnel assigned to each office. Additionally, the Memphis District's Caruthersville, Mo., Area Office has eight field personnel assigned to their area of responsibility.

At Corps District Headquarters in Memphis, Readiness Branch Chief Steve Barry said he expects to begin Phase I floodfight activities in the Memphis and West Memphis areas sometime around May 1.

The Corps' Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Memphis has gone to Activation Level III with elevated staffing to provide Command and Control support for the response effort. The EOC is staffed 12 hours per day, with personnel on call 24 hours per day.

The Corps' Division Headquarters in Vicksburg, Miss, coordinates all floodfight activities in the Mississippi Valley. The Corps' Emergency Operations Center in Memphis is directing these floodfight activities in conjunction with the affected states, levee districts and other local interest groups.

The Memphis District's flood risk reduction system has prevented more than \$4.3 billion in flood damages and protected more than five million acres of cropland in the last decade alone.

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